

# Negotiating Salary



You want to get as much money and as many benefits and perks in your new job as you possibly can. Your future employer wants to get you as cheaply as possible, to save the company's money. In between these two positions is where the room is for negotiating your next salary. To get the most you can in your pay rate and benefits, you must know how to do the negotiation dance. The three most important things to do are: Prepare, prepare, prepare.

Here are the things you need to know and do **before** you walk in to the interview:

- What are realistic wages in your area for the occupation? Go to this website: <http://wi.dws.state.ut.us/Owi/wages.asp>, or get the book, **Utah Occupational Wages** at your local Department of Workforce Services office or library. Read about wage data and how to find the wage information for the occupation in question. Wages depend on many factors and can vary from place to place as well as depending on your own qualifications.
- Research wages in the industry you would be working in. Wages for the same occupation may be paid differently in different industries. For example, accountants in the aerospace industry would likely be paid more than accountants in a retail store.
- Take a realistic look at yourself. What and how much experience in the occupation do you bring to the table? Do you have extra qualities or skills that make you more valuable to the employer than other applicants for that position? As a rule, men tend to overestimate their worth, and women tend to underestimate theirs. Pretend you're the other gender with the same skills and experience, and see if your opinion of your worth would change. If so, revise it in that direction.
- Assess the job market in your area. If there's a shortage of workers in your field, you can negotiate for a higher wage than if there is a glut of people looking for those jobs. Talking to various employers and staff at the Dept. of Workforce Services can help you get a feel for this.

## Tips from the experts on negotiating your next salary:

- Try to avoid divulging what you are currently making (or made in your last job). Even if you must tell, don't let that determine what you negotiate for now. Never misrepresent your past pay rate.
- Be assertive and firm with your counteroffer. Rachel Cohen, a recruiter for Muses, and expert in negotiations says: "Women forget that this is not about being as nice as possible. Don't apologize, don't backpedal. Firm is not bitchy or rude—it is confident, strategic, and competent." Remember, you're looking for an employer, not a new best friend.
- Wait until a firm offer is given before negotiating. Then, only negotiate if you are seriously considering taking the job.
- Try to get a figure or pay range from the recruiter or interviewer first.
- Get final offers in writing before accepting, and don't accept on the spot.

